

FINAL BILL REPORT

2SHB 2002

C 266 L 06

Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Authorizing limited continuing foster care and support services up to age twenty-one.

Sponsors: By House Committee on Appropriations (originally sponsored by Representatives Dickerson, Roberts, Kagi, Kenney and Santos).

House Committee on Children & Family Services

House Committee on Appropriations

Senate Committee on Human Services & Corrections

Senate Committee on Ways & Means

Background:

If there are allegations of abandonment, abuse or neglect, or no parent who is capable of caring for a child, the state may investigate the allegations and initiate a dependency proceeding in juvenile court. If the court finds the statutory requirements have been met, the court will find the child to be a dependent of the state.

Whenever the court finds a child to be a dependent, the court will enter a dispositional plan for the case which will include an order for the placement of the child either within the home or outside the home. If the child is placed outside the home, he or she may be placed with a relative or in non-relative foster care.

A child may remain in foster care until the age of 18. However, a youth may be permitted to remain in foster care or group care through age 20 to enable the youth to complete his or her high school or vocational school program.

Summary:

The age limitations are removed for foster youth who participate in a high school academic or vocational program.

Beginning in 2006, the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) is granted authority to allow up to 50 youth reaching 18 years of age to continue in foster care or group care as needed to participate in or complete a post-high school academic or vocational program and to receive necessary support and transition services. In 2007 and 2008, 50 additional youth per year may be permitted to continue to remain in foster or group care after reaching the age of 18 as needed to complete a post-high school academic or vocational program.

To be eligible for continued foster care and services after age 18, the youth must be actively enrolled in a post high school academic or vocational program and must maintain a 2.0 grade

point average. A youth who remains eligible for such placement and services pursuant to DSHS rules may continue in foster care or group care until the youth reaches his or her 21st birthday.

Nothing in the act should be construed as creating any of the following:

- (1) an entitlement to services;
- (2) judicial authority to extend the jurisdiction of Juvenile Court under a dependency proceeding to a youth who has turned 18 years of age or to order the provision of services to the youth; or
- (3) a private right of action or claim on the part of any individual, entity, or agency against the DSHS or any contractor of the DSHS.

The DSHS is authorized to adopt rules establishing eligibility for independent living services and placement for youths pursuant to the act. The DSHS may not refer cases involving youth between the ages of 18 and 21 to the Division of Child Support.

Upon approval by the Washington State Institute for Public Policy (WSIPP) board, the WSIPP is required to conduct a study on the outcomes for foster youth who receive continued support, as well as any savings to the state. The WSIPP is permitted to receive non-state funding to conduct the study.

Votes on Final Passage:

House	97	1	
Senate	45	0	(Senate amended)
House	96	1	(House concurred)

Effective: June 7, 2006